News Releases
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Executive Council
Tourism, Culture and Recreation
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Provincial Sport and Training Centre Officially Opens

The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has a new, world-class, state-of-the-art athlete training facility, thanks to almost $8 million in funding provided by three levels of government, the sports community, and the private sector.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre, located on Crosbie Road in St. John's, was opened by the Honourable Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador; the Honourable Loyola Hearn, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Regional Minister for Newfoundland and Labrador on behalf of the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA); St. John's Mayor Dennis O'Keefe; and Dr. Pat Parfrey, Chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre Steering Committee.

Premier Williams noted the centre, located in proximity to existing sports infrastructure – including the Swilers Rugby Club and the Wishingwell soccer facility – will serve as a venue for athlete training and to host provincial, national and international competitions for the more than 70,000 athletes, coaches and administrators that make up Sport Newfoundland and Labrador (SNL).

"Today marks a milestone for sport in Newfoundland and Labrador," said Premier Williams. "The athletes of this province now have a first-class facility in which they can train and compete. Newfoundland and Labrador has produced world-calibre athletes, particularly in recent years, and this facility is designed to ensure we continue to nurture young talent so that there will be many more in years to come. The Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre will enable our provincial athletes to reach new heights in their athletic careers, and I look forward to seeing their increased contributions to sport on a provincial, national and international level."

"As the last Olympics and Stanley Cup Playoffs have shown, Newfoundland and Labrador athletes have an unlimited passion and a will to win at the highest levels of competitive sports," said Minister Hearn. "With the completion of this world-class facility, our government is helping to ensure our athletes' potential will not be limited by our sports infrastructure. The Government of Canada is delighted to work with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the City of St. John's and the Sports Centre Steering Committee to strengthen our athletes' collective hand as they prepare for national and international competitions."

The Newfoundland and Labrador Sport Centre complex, which will be operated as a provincial Crown corporation, includes two buildings – a multi-purpose indoor training facility and a high-performance centre.

The training facility, to be known as The PowerPlex, is named for multi-sport athlete Norbert (Dick) Power, best known for his accomplishments in the sport of soccer. It can be subdivided into two gymnasia – the Crosbie Gymnasium and the Parsons Gymnasium - named for the late Andrew C. Crosbie and the late Bernard D. Parsons, in recognition of the Crosbie Family's support for the project.

The PowerPlex provides Newfoundland and Labrador's elite athletes with access to a boxing/combat room, locker/shower rooms and a 2,944 square-foot gymnasium which is large enough to have four basketball, seven volleyball or seven badminton courts playable at any one time.

The high-performance centre, to be called the Dr. Noel Browne High-Performance Centre, is an extension to the adjacent Swilers Rugby Club, and includes a multi-purpose meeting room, three offices and a strength and conditioning room which is on equal scale, and of equal quality, to many of North America's professional sports teams' facilities. Dr. Browne is regarded as the founding father of

rugby in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"After much anticipation, it is certainly exciting to see this centre become a reality," said Mayor O'Keefe. "This new, much-needed sports infrastructure is a welcome addition to the City of St. John's, and I am confident that its benefits will be felt throughout the province."

Dr. Parfrey noted the realization of this centre was the result of excellent working partnerships with the three levels of government, the community from which funds were raised, Swilers Rugby Club, and Sport Newfoundland and Labrador.

"Today is a momentous occasion as this facility means positive change for Newfoundland and Labrador's athletes and the future of sport in this province," said Dr. Parfrey.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre is funded through a cost-shared public/private partnership between the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government and the private sector. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, through the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, has contributed over $2.8 million to the facility; the Government of Canada has contributed over $2.5 million under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Municipal and Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) as administered by ACOA, and the remaining funds were provided by the City of St. John's ($1.3 million) and the Swilers Rugby Club and Sport Newfoundland and Labrador ($1.23 million).

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BACKGROUNDER

- The Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation operated and managed the Torbay Recreation Centre until April 2002.
- The recreation centre had been used as a training and competition venue for the province's athletes and teams participating in the Newfoundland and Labrador Games as well as the Canada Games.
- Since that time, the facility has been closed and a number of options for its replacement were investigated.
- The preferred option was a partnership with the Federal and Provincial Governments, the City of St. John's, and the Swilers Rugby Club/Sport Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Construction of the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre began in the spring of 2007.
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre complex will serve as a venue for athlete training and to host provincial, national and international competitions for Sport Newfoundland and Labrador (SNL).
- The centre includes two buildings – a multi-purpose indoor training facility (The PowerPlex) and a high-performance centre (Dr. Noel Browne High Performance Centre).
- Sport Newfoundland and Labrador (SNL) has 50,000 athletes, 20,000 coaches and 800 administrators in 44 different sports organizations.

The PowerPlex

- The PowerPlex will have one of the largest hardwood sports floors in Canada. The floor is designed to withstand the rigors of high-use training, and perform at a high standard for all levels of competition in multiple sports.
- With an unobstructed interior floor space of 64 metres in length by 46 metres in width, the PowerPlex is equal to half the size of a rugby or soccer field, and has a ceiling height of more than 10 metres.
- The Crosbie and Parsons gymnasia will have four basketball, seven volleyball or seven badminton courts playable at any one time. The facility will also have main centre courts for each of these sports.
- This floor space can be subdivided into four equal spaces (23 metres x 32 metres) by divider curtains to accommodate multiple activities at once.
- Four score clocks can keep track of four different events at any one time or be synchronized for a single event.
- Seating capacity on opening will be in the region of 500 people but can be increased significantly depending on the event.
- The 109.64 square metre combat room, complete with wall to wall seamless sports mat and wall padding, can cater to Sport Newfoundland and Labrador's six qualified combat sports in wrestling, tae kwon do, karate, judo, boxing and kenpo. This space can also entertain other training uses for all sports.

Dr. Noel Browne High-Performance Centre

- The high-performance centre will include a 242.35 square metre strength and conditioning room, capable of handling up to 20 athletes at any one time.
- The strength and conditioning room is equipped on an equal scale and quality to what you would find in many of North America's professional sports teams' facilities.

- A multi-purpose boardroom for hosting technical courses, coaching clinics, meetings, seminars, and more, can accommodate up to 50 people. This room also has a built in, high-end audio visual system.

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